

Appl. No. 10/712,876
Amdt. Dated: June 12, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 10, 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending and claims 1-17 stand rejected. However, claims 1-17 have been indicated as being allowable over the prior art, but for the rejections under §112, second paragraph. Applicants gratefully thank the Examiner for indication of the same. Claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 11 and 15 have been amended to delete recitation of step indicators therein. The abstract and specification has also been amended.

Applicants request entry of the above-identified amendments, which conform the claims to U.S. practice. No new matter is being introduced by this Amendment as antecedent support is set forth in the specification and the original claims.

Abstract

The Abstract has been amended to delete reference to the objected to language "[p]rovided is" as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objections to the Abstract be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse.

More specifically, the Examiner suggests deletion of the step indicators such as "(S100)" in claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 11 and 15. Appropriate correction as suggested by the Examiner is reflected in amended claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 11 and 15.

Further, the Examiner alleges that recitation of the term "N times" and "M times" is vague and confusing. Claim 1 has been amended to recite "a plurality of (N) times" and "a plurality of (M) times", respectively, to clarify the respective terms. In addition the specification has been amended on page 5, beginning at line 27 to reflect that use of the terms "M times" and "N times" throughout the specification means a first plurality of (M) times and a second plurality of (N) times, respectively, where M and N are each whole numbers that may be different or the same number as each other.

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The Amendments here presented are made for the purposes of better defining the invention, rather than to overcome the rejections for patentability. No presumption should therefore attach that the claims have been narrowed over those earlier presented, or that subject matter or equivalents thereof to which the Applicants are entitled has been surrendered.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections under § 112 be withdrawn and allow the same to issue.

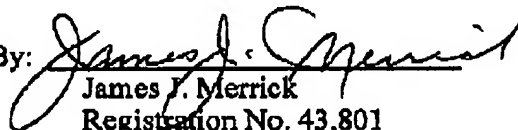
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, Applicants submit that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification to this effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any charges with respect to this response or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account 06-1130 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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